

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

- 1. (Currently Amended)** A coupling structure, comprising:

a shaft body having a slip-off preventing groove and a positioning recess close to an end portion thereof;

a shaft joint having an engagement groove with which the shaft body is engaged, bores facing the engagement groove, and

a flexible member which projects in the depth direction of the engagement groove, extends externally from the engagement groove along a longitudinal direction of the engagement groove shaft joint, and engages an engagement face in the positioning recess such that the flexible member regulates movement of the shaft body in the [[a]] longitudinal direction of the engagement groove [[,]] an engagement direction of the flexible member with the positioning recess being perpendicular to the longitudinal direction; and

a coupling shaft, which is inserted into the bores and the slip-off preventing groove, for coupling the shaft body and the shaft joint;

wherein the flexible member is configured to be deflected in a width direction of the
engagement groove for engaging the engagement face.

- 2. (Previously Presented)** The coupling structure according to Claim 1, wherein the flexible member has a deflection regulating portion, the deflection regulating portion being substantially planar and including a planar surface facing a side face of the engagement groove.

- 3. (Previously Presented)** The coupling structure according to Claim 2, wherein a tip of the flexible member is bent outward in a width direction of the engagement groove.

- 4. (Previously Presented)** The coupling structure according to Claim 3, wherein the flexible member is provided more inwardly than another side face of the engagement groove.

5. (Previously Presented) The coupling structure according to Claim 2, wherein the flexible member is provided more inwardly than another side face of the engagement groove.

6. (Previously Presented) The coupling structure of Claim 1, wherein the shaft body includes a top face adjacent the coupling shaft and a side face, the positioning recess being disposed in the side face of the shaft body.

7. (Currently Amended) A coupling structure, comprising:

- a shaft body having a positioning recess close to an end portion thereof;
- a shaft joint having an engagement groove engaging the shaft body;
- bores facing the engagement groove; and
- a flexible member projecting in a depth direction of the engagement groove, extending externally from the engagement groove along a longitudinal direction of the engagement groove to regulate movement of the shaft body in the longitudinal direction of the engagement groove, and engaging with an engagement face in the positioning recess in a direction perpendicular to a longitudinal direction of the shaft body;

a coupling shaft inserted into the bores and coupling the shaft body and the shaft joint; and

a semi-circular groove near an end portion of the shaft body containing the coupling shaft,

wherein the flexible member is configured to be deflected in a width direction of the engagement groove for engaging the engagement face.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently Amended) A coupling structure, comprising:

- a shaft body including:
- an engagement portion, and

a positioning recess close to an end portion of said shaft body and adjacent the engagement portion;

a shaft joint including:

an engagement groove with which the shaft body is engaged,
bores facing the engagement groove, and

a flexible member which projects in a depth direction of the engagement groove, extends externally from the engagement groove along a longitudinal direction of the shaft joint, and engages an engagement face in the positioning recess to regulate movement of the shaft body in [[a]] the longitudinal direction of the engagement groove; and

a coupling shaft, which is inserted into the bores, for coupling the shaft body and the shaft joint,

wherein the flexible member is configured to be deflected in a width direction of the engagement groove for engaging the engagement face.

10. (Currently Amended) The coupling structure according to Claim [[1]] 3, wherein the tip [[portion]] of the flexible member extending externally from the engagement groove along a longitudinal direction of the engagement groove shaft joint is accessible to be bent outward outwardly-deflected in order to deflect the flexible member and disengage the flexible member from the positioning recess.

11. (Currently Amended) The coupling structure according to Claim 10 [[1]], wherein the positioning recess of the shaft body and the flexible member are configured such that, when the flexible member has been disengaged from the positioning member and the shaft body has been withdrawn from the engagement groove, the flexible member is released and extends to prevent [[prevents]] the shaft body from being reinserted[[inserted]] into the engagement groove along the depth direction unless [[when]] the flexible member is aligned [[unaligned]] with the positioning recess.